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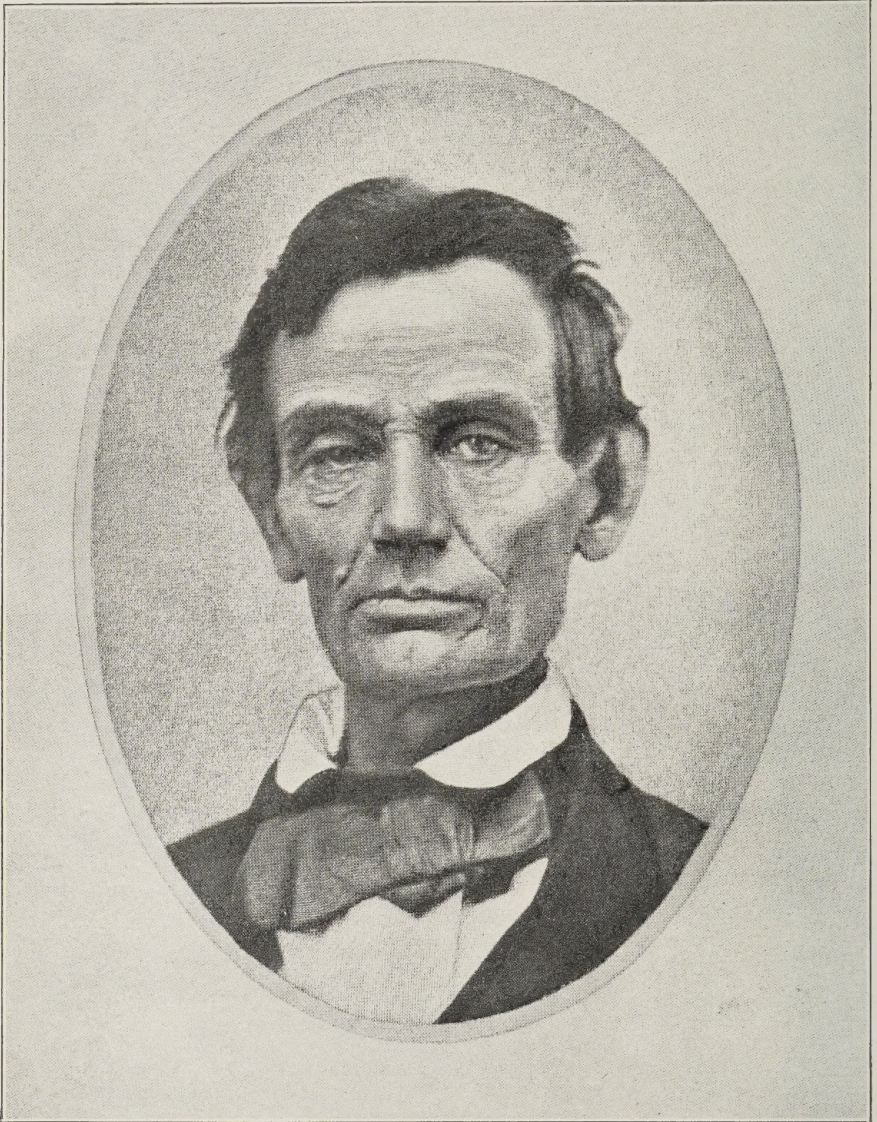
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# THE LINCOLN FOUNDATION

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To encourage and promote the research for and  
the preservation of historical matter relating to  
Abraham Lincoln, sixteenth president of the  
United States.

The author was J. C. Thompson

1924

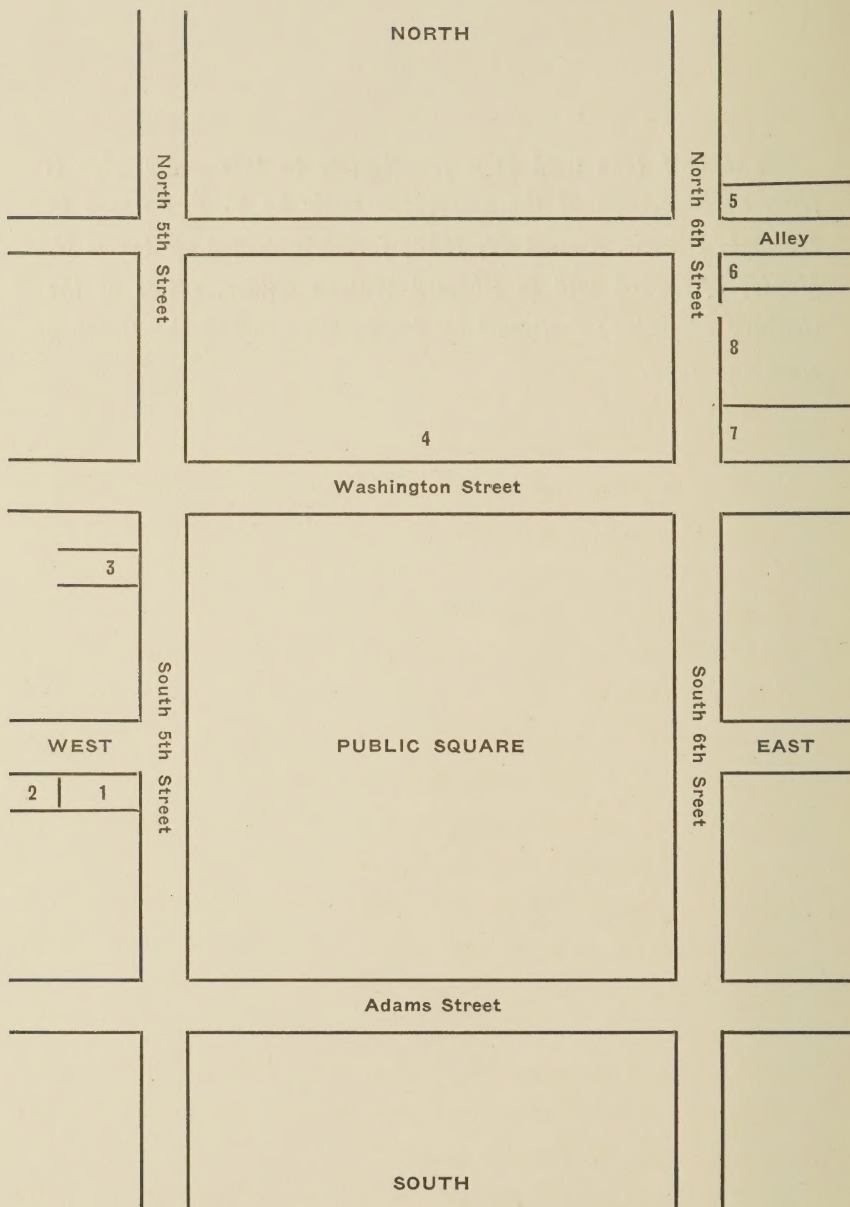




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*The half tone used as a frontispiece to this manuscript is from a photograph of the ambrotype made by T. P. Pierson in Macomb, Illinois, August 27, 1858; formerly owned by James K. Magie; afterward sold to Richard Watson Gilder, editor of the Century magazine; destroyed by fire in the office of the Century company, 1888.*



1. Office of J. C. Conkling.
2. Telegraph Office.
3. Office of Lincoln & Herndon.
4. Telegraph Office.

5. Office of Sangamo Journal.
6. Store of John Carmody.
7. Logan Building.
8. Hand Ball Court.

## MANUSCRIPT 2

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DID MR LINCOLN PLAY HAND BALL DURING THE  
NATIONAL CONVENTION OF 1860?

WHERE DID MR. LINCOLN FIRST RECEIVE THE NEWS  
OF HIS NOMINATION?

In 1860 the State Journal occupied the three story building at 116 north sixth street. In the three story building at 114 north sixth street, a store was kept by John Carmody. There is an alley between the two buildings. This is the famous 'alley by the journal office' so often mentioned in Lincoln literature.

The three story building at the south end of the block was owned by Judge Stephen T. Logan. The vacant lots between the Carmody store and the Logan building formed the hand ball court. The two other sides were inclosed by board fences six or eight feet high. Along inside the fences were seats for visitors and players who were waiting their turn.

The ball, when in play, was tossed against the north wall of the Logan building. The game required six players, three on a side. The three players who lost paid 10 cents each, making 30 cents a game.

Mr Lincoln did not attend the convention. He was too much of a candidate, he said, to go to Chicago and not

enough of a candidate to stay away. He remained in Springfield.

No one insists that Mr Lincoln was playing hand ball at the exact time he first received the news of the nomination. That he played hand ball on every day of the convention, however, cannot be questioned.

On the last day of the convention, Mr Lincoln was 'down town' bright and early. He talked on the streets with neighbors and friends as had been his wont for many years. He was anxious and depressed. The anxiety and depression disappeared, however, upon his reading the bulletin showing the result of the second ballot.

The first event worth recording of which we have any account, was the visit he made to the law office of James C. Conkling at about half past eight o'clock. This office was located on the second floor at 119 south fifth street where the Reisch building now stands. There was a telegraph office on the same floor to the rear. There was, also, a telegraph office operated by another company, on the north side of the public square where telegrams and bulletins were received from the wigwam.

Mr Conkling had been in Chicago for several days and had returned home unexpectedly. When Mr Lincoln heard this, he was quite anxious to see Mr Conkling and learn the news. It is now known that Mr Conkling assured Mr Lincoln that he would be nominated that day; but, Mr Lincoln was not so sanguine and quitted the place, saying: "Well, Conkling, I guess I'll go back to my office and practice law." This



remark would imply that Mr. Lincoln had been in the office of Lincoln & Herndon that morning before going to the office of Mr Conkling. This, however, is not important.

Mr Lincoln returned to the office of Lincoln & Herndon about ten o'clock where several friends and supporters had foregathered. Where had he been during the interim? Had he come directly from the law office of Mr Conkling? or, from the hand ball court? When did he play hand ball? Ward Hill Lamon says that he played hand ball early in the day. It is clear that he never returned to the hand ball court after his nomination. It follows, then, he must have played before going to the office of J. C. Conkling; or, between that time and his return to the office of Lincoln & Herndon.

Shortly thereafter Edward L. Baker, one of the editors of the Sangamo Journal, appeared at the office of Lincoln & Herndon with two bulletins; one saying that the delegates were coming into the wigwam; the other, that the names of the candidates for president had been presented to the convention. Baker departed but returned in a short time with a bulletin showing the result of the first ballot, giving Mr Seward 173½ votes, Mr Lincoln 102, with scattering votes for other candidates.\* There is proof that Mr Lincoln then threw himself upon a lounge in the office without expressing any opinion regarding the situation. Mr. Lincoln, it will be observed, was very guarded in all his statements throughout the day. He arose presently and said: "The dispatches appear to be coming to the Journal office . . . let us go

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\* The convention included 465 delegates, making 233 votes necessary for a choice.

over there. When they arrived at the foot of the stairway leading to the telegraph office on the north side of the public square, Mr Lincoln said: "let us go up; it must be about time for the second ballot." The result of the second ballot was coming in on the wire as they entered the room. The bulletin when completed was handed to Mr Lincoln. Mr Seward had received 184½ votes, Mr Lincoln 181, a gain of only 11 votes for Mr Seward, a gain of 79 votes for Mr. Lincoln. Mr Lincoln said nothing but did not conceal a look of intense satisfaction. Mr Lincoln and others then went over to the Journal office. Soon afterward Baker announced he would go over to the telegraph office for the third ballot. What happened when Baker returned is best told by the gate keeper\* of the ball court which is in substantial harmony with other printed reports and is now published, in full, for the first time:

"I worked in the Carmody store and usually had charge of the ball court. I smoothed the wall and leveled the ground. I made the balls. Old stockings were raveled out and wound into balls and covered with buck skin. Mr Lincoln was not a good player. He learned the game when he was too old. But he liked to play and did tolerably well.

"I remember when he was nominated as tho it were yesterday. It was the last day of the convention and he was plainly nervous and restless. He played hand ball a good deal during every day of the convention, evidently to relieve the overstrained mind.

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\* William Donnelly, a nephew of John Carmody.

"I was standing down in front of the Carmody store when E. L. Baker, Charlie Zane\* and one or two others brought word from the telegraph office that he was nominated. It was the bulletin showing the result of the third and last ballot. I naturally followed the crowd up stairs to the editorial room on the second floor. The stairway was in the alley outside the building. The telegram was read and then handed to Mr Lincoln who read it out loud again. After a lot of hand shaking, we returned to the street below. Mr Lincoln appeared anxious to get away. When he came to the entrance of the ball court, the players gathered round, congratulated him and pledged him their support. He thanked them, looked at the telegram he had in his hand and said: "There's a little woman over on eighth street that will be glad to hear the news; if you'll excuse me, I'll go and tell her." He then left for his home. I can see him now as he went away. He leaned forward and walked mighty fast. The boy that went with him had to run almost to keep up with him. Mr Lincoln never came back to the court or played hand ball after the day he was nominated.

"I did not vote for Mr Lincoln in 1860. There were only three Irishmen who did.† They were called Irish republicans and were regarded as curiosities.

The proof is positive that Mr Lincoln walked rapidly southward on the east side of sixth street; he met and shook

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\* Judge Charles S. Zane.

† Michael Doyle, Thomas Fagan and Dr. Patricius Moran. Senator Douglas was able to keep Gen. James Shields in office which secured the Irish vote for the democratic party.

hands with the cashier of the old Marine bank; a little farther along, a messenger boy 'sawed off' a telegram for which Mr Lincoln receipted and went on his way. This telegram was probably the first official announcement of his nomination.

Mrs Lincoln had already heard the news and was holding a reception for neighbors and friends who 'hurried over' to extend their congratulations. What were Mr Lincoln's emotions as he returned to the modest home at the corner of eighth and Jackson streets? We have heard a great deal regarding the domestic life of the Lincolns; and, if the family life was not all that it might have been, this incident is clear to the effect that the girl upon whom he had bestowed the ring inscribed with the words 'Love is Eternal' was always first and uppermost in his thoughts.

After the nomination of Mr Lincoln, artists came to Springfield to paint his portrait and sculptors came to model his bust. Mr Lincoln had not the time for a separate sitting for each artist, so he agreed to open his mail every morning in representative hall where the artists could place their easels and perform a certain amount of work every day. This plan was accepted.

Among the artists who came to Springfield was George F. Wright, who painted the portrait afterward purchased by Mr Lincoln and presented to the Butler family with whom he had boarded in earlier days. This is a picture of great merit and is now in the possession of Mr E. W. Payne.

In an affidavit signed by Henry Wirt Butler regarding the history of the Lincoln portrait, he includes the statement



that he played hand ball with Mr Lincoln on the last day of the convention and that he played at the personal request of Mr Lincoln, himself.

Mr Clinton L. Conkling was a man of many admirable qualities. No one who knew him could believe that he would knowingly or intentionally distort a fact or claim a preferment to which he was not entitled. Yet, it must be said, he put forward a most surprising pretention that involved him in a hopeless inconsistency. The foundation is not responsible for this controversy; but it has a right to review the testimony and report its findings.

Mr Conkling's misfortune arose from the belief that he, himself, was the first person to notify Mr Lincoln of his nomination. He related this interesting story in private conversations and public speeches, without eliminating the points at variance. On the 12th day of February 1920, he delivered a memorial address before the constitutional convention, which was in part as follows:

"On Friday morning, May 18, 1860 . . . . the third day of the convention . . . . James C. Conkling who had been in Chicago, several days . . . . arrived home . . . . About half past eight o'clock, Mr Lincoln came into the office and inquired for him. . . . being told that Mr Conkling was not in but probably would be in an hour, Mr Lincoln said he would go out on the street and come again as he was anxious to see Mr. Conkling. Presently, the latter came in and Mr Lincoln again called . . . .

"After discussing the situation at some length, Mr Lincoln arose . . . and said: "Well, Conkling, I believe I will go back to my office and practice law." He then left the office.

"A moment after Mr Lincoln left, the wires in the adjoining telegraph office brought the news of his nomination and I rushed down the stairs after him. I met him . . . just a few steps away . . . all unconscious of the news. I cried to him: 'Mr Lincoln, you are nominated.' Taking my outstretched hand in his . . . he looked down upon me and said: 'Well, Clinton, then we have got it.'

"Then the excited crowds surged around him and I dropped out of sight."

No one questions the motives of Mr Conkling. But it must be evident to every thinking mind that his oft repeated statement amounts to a contradiction in itself. Mr Lincoln was not nominated for more than three hours after he left the office of James C. Conkling. The convention did not assemble until ten o'clock. There were the usual nominating speeches, after which three ballots were taken. The nomination was made in the early afternoon. Mr Addison G. Procter, the last known living delegate who sat in the convention, states that it occurred about one o'clock, altho, he cannot give the exact time.

Mr Lincoln was in the office of Lincoln & Herndon, when the bulletin showing the result of the first ballot was received. He read the bulletin of the second ballot in the

telegraph office on the north side of the public square. He was in the editorial room of the Sangamo Journal when Edward L. Baker brought in the bulletin of the third ballot; it was read aloud, then handed to Mr Lincoln whereupon he exclaimed: "I knew it would come when I saw the second ballot." The literature relating to this last hour is extensive and will repay a most careful study.

This manuscript will not set the matter at rest. It is printed to preserve the priceless snap shots of the Lincoln conversations.











